

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

CURRENT BUSINESS REPORTS

May 1989

CB-89-100

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EDT., TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 1989

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for May adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading - day differences but not for price changes were \$141.1 billion, 5.2 percent above May 1988. Total sales in the March through May period were 5.1 percent above the same period a year ago.

Durable goods were 3.9 percent above the previous year. Furniture stores were up 7.9 percent from May of last year.

Nondurable goods were 6.1 percent above the previous year. General merchandise stores decreased 1.2 percent from April but were 5.0 percent above May last year. Food stores were up 7.2 percent from the previous year while gasoline service stations increased 8.2 percent in the same period.

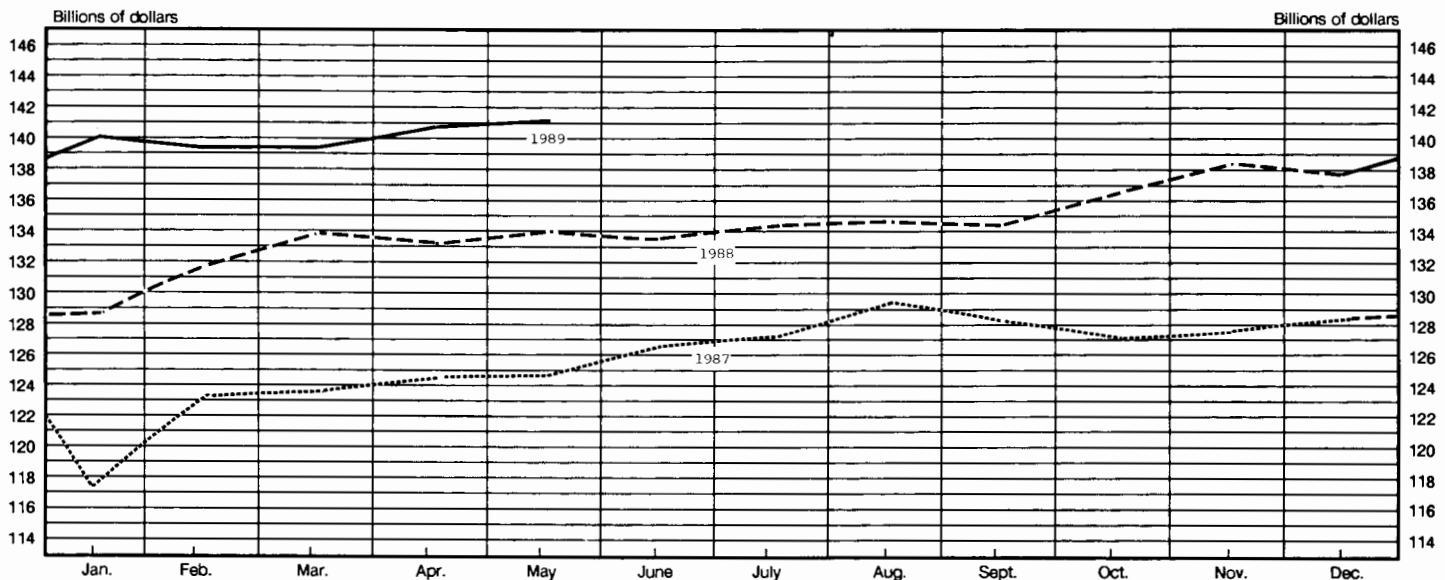
Note: Since this survey is based on a sample, the estimates will differ from the universe values due to both sampling and nonsampling error. For the month-to-month, year-to-year, and quarter-to-quarter percent changes shown at the total, durable, and nondurable levels, the margins of sampling error range from 1.4 to 3.9 percentage points above and below the estimate. See page 4 for a more complete description.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for June is scheduled to be released July 14, 1989 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

January 1987-May 1989

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences)



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U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report, the Monthly Retail Trade report, and the Annual Retail Trade report are available on a single subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. This report is available electronically in CENDATA, the Bureau's on-line information service, through a commercial vendor. For further information, contact Customer Services, DUSD, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, or call (301) 763-4100 or (301) 763-7561.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1989			1988		1989			1988	
		May ² adv.	Apr. prel.	Mar. final	May	Apr.	May ² adv.	Apr. prel.	Mar. final	May ¹	Apr. ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	146,871	137,370	139,759	137,555	132,374	141,085	140,942	139,516	134,048	133,077
	Total (excl. auto group)...	111,119	104,969	106,497	104,228	100,186	109,603	109,531	108,729	103,729	102,664
	Durable goods, total.....	59,017	53,642	53,784	55,300	52,897	53,953	53,818	52,886	51,905	51,889
52	Building mat., hardware, garden										
	supply, and mobile home dealers..	8,868	7,827	6,774	8,678	7,884	7,421	7,418	7,228	7,450	7,400
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	5,431	4,842	5,960	5,372	(*)	5,335	5,190	5,298	5,221
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,203	1,050	1,295	1,264	(*)	1,118	1,117	1,159	1,173
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	35,752	32,401	33,262	33,327	32,188	31,482	31,411	30,787	30,319	30,413
551,2,5,	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous										
6,7,9	automotive dealers.....	33,225	29,879	30,818	30,744	29,641	29,043	28,897	28,273	27,797	27,911
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	26,285	27,545	27,189	26,206	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,522	2,444	2,583	2,547	(*)	2,514	2,514	2,522	2,502
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and										
	equipment stores.....	8,087	7,629	7,840	7,312	7,148	8,337	8,340	8,195	7,730	7,647
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,820	3,882	3,770	3,683	(*)	4,000	3,929	3,781	3,777
5722,32	Household appliance, radio,										
	and TV stores.....	(*)	3,318	3,427	3,069	2,992	(*)	3,783	3,697	3,414	3,343
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	744	759	818	789	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	87,854	83,728	85,975	82,255	79,477	87,132	87,124	86,630	82,143	81,188
53	General merchandise group stores..	15,513	14,638	14,537	14,714	13,818	15,668	15,866	15,746	14,923	14,799
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)	13,078	12,396	12,239	12,296	11,580	13,223	13,401	13,246	12,471	12,385
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts.)	(*)	12,812	12,653	12,739	12,033	(*)	13,851	13,679	12,907	12,856
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	589	660	633	636	(*)	620	643	647	648
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,653	1,638	1,785	1,602	(*)	1,845	1,857	1,805	1,766
54	Food stores.....	30,088	28,387	29,459	27,695	26,813	29,437	29,278	29,046	27,452	27,018
541	Grocery stores.....	28,234	26,636	27,563	25,870	25,118	27,626	27,460	27,156	25,665	25,295
554	Gasoline service stations.....	9,485	9,016	8,599	8,746	8,338	9,191	9,107	8,847	8,491	8,363
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	6,914	6,778	6,992	6,397	6,333	7,143	7,248	6,977	6,619	6,516
561	Men's and boys' clothing										
	and furnishings stores.....	(*)	722	681	734	726	(*)	777	772	750	761
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty										
	stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,634	2,693	2,521	2,482	(*)	2,799	2,723	2,604	2,561
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,589	1,656	1,564	1,537	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,285	1,372	1,196	1,188	(*)	1,313	1,216	1,177	1,159
58	Eating and drinking places.....	13,812	13,384	13,567	13,308	12,893	13,294	13,344	13,581	12,808	12,728
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	5,165	4,796	5,223	4,856	4,748	5,129	5,038	5,151	4,871	4,875
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,507	1,499	1,593	1,524	(*)	1,629	1,619	1,624	1,611
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department										
	store merchandise).....	(*)	262	275	278	280	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF.....	(*)	33,379	33,932	32,930	31,474	(*)	36,720	36,193	34,171	33,909
594											

*Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of business.

NA Not available. ¹ Revised

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-89-04.

²Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.

³Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

⁴GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.

Note: Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business.

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		May 1989 advance from--		Apr. 1989 preliminary from--		Mar. 1989 through May 1989	
		Apr. 1989 prelim.	May 1988 final	Mar. 1989 final	Apr. 1988 final	Dec. 1988 through Feb. 1989	Mar. 1988 through May 1988
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.1	+5.2	+1.0	+5.9	+0.7	+5.1
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.1	+5.7	+0.7	+6.7	+0.9	+6.0
	Durable goods, total.....	+0.3	+3.9	+1.8	+3.7	-0.2	+3.0
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	0.0	-0.4	+2.6	+0.2	-4.3	-0.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+0.2	+3.8	+2.0	+3.3	0.0	+2.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+0.5	+4.5	+2.2	+3.5	0.0	+2.4
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	0.0	+7.9	+1.8	+9.1	+1.5	+8.4
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.0	+6.1	+0.6	+7.3	+1.3	+6.5
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-1.2	+5.0	+0.8	+7.2	-0.5	+5.8
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	-1.3	+6.0	+1.2	+8.2	+0.1	+6.7
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	+1.3	+7.7	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.5	+7.2	+0.8	+8.4	+2.3	+7.7
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.6	+7.6	+1.1	+8.6	+2.3	+7.8
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+0.9	+8.2	+2.9	+8.9	+6.2	+7.3
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-1.4	+7.9	+3.9	+11.2	+0.5	+8.2
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.4	+3.8	-1.7	+4.8	-2.3	+5.2
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+1.8	+5.3	-2.2	+3.3	+0.8	+4.8

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Apr. 1989 prelim.	Mar. 1989 final	Apr. 1988	Apr. 1989 prelim.	Mar. 1989 final	Apr. ² 1988
	Retail trade, total.....	49,719	50,597	47,202	52,290	51,584	48,755
53	General merchandise group stores.....	13,569	13,487	12,730	14,757	14,627	13,677
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	11,958	11,818	11,197	12,928	12,790	11,975
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	12,362	12,218	11,627	13,335	13,209	12,422
533	Variety stores.....	468	525	498	492	513	507
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,143	1,144	1,035	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	15,854	16,649	15,369	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	15,636	16,384	15,128	16,120	15,953	15,158
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,646	3,785	3,362	3,933	3,721	3,512
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,439	1,470	1,303	1,544	1,474	1,372
566	Shoe stores.....	798	863	735	833	744	723
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,828	3,110	2,746	3,025	3,049	2,863

NA Not available. ² Revised

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-89-04.

²Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Note: The Group II component of the sample consists of companies which had 11 or more retail establishments according to the most recent update of multi-establishment files and which were selected with certainty (i.e., their sales size exceeded specified dollar volume cutoffs which vary by kind of business).



Sample Design and Reliability of Data

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. In addition, sampling variability between the subsample used for the advance estimates and the full sample can cause a difference.

Percentage differences between advance and full sample preliminary estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from approximately -0.3 percent to +0.7 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.3 percent for the past 12 months. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher. Sampling variability of and revisions to advance-to-preliminary estimates are shown in table 4 below.

Preliminary estimates for April 1989 and final estimates for March 1989 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for April (BR-89-04). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of revisions, and the techniques used in developing the estimates.

The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, indicates a range about the estimate which corresponds to a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the estimate is up .8 percent and the margin of sampling error is 1.2 percentage points above or below the estimate, then the indicated range is down .4 percent up to 2.0 percent. If the range contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. The Monthly Retail Trade Report includes explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability along with additional measures of sampling variability.

Table 4. Sampling Variability of and Revision to Advance-to-Preliminary Estimate

SIC code	Kind of Business	Estimated coefficient of Variation in percent of the						Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the Advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Advance-to- preliminary ratio		Ratio to same month a year ago	Dollar volume sales est.	Ratio of current quarter to prev. quarter					
		Range ¹		Median	Median	Median	Median	Range ²		Mean	Aver. o absolut diff.
		From	To					From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.0	-0.3	+0.7	+0.1	0.3
	Total (excl. auto).	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.9	-1.0	+1.8	0.0	0.4
	Durable goods, total..	1.4	1.7	1.6	2.3	1.7	2.2	-1.6	+1.8	+0.3	1.0
52	Building materials, group stores.....	0.6	3.6	1.6	3.9	3.3	3.1	-5.2	+1.5	-0.9	1.6
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.7	2.2	1.9	3.1	2.3	3.0	-2.1	+2.7	+0.4	1.2
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.2	2.2	1.5	3.7	2.4	3.2	-2.5	+2.8	+0.3	1.2
57	Furniture, home furn. and equipment stores.....	1.6	2.3	1.9	3.7	3.3	2.7	-3.3	+4.4	+0.5	1.5
	Nondur. stores, total...	0.5	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.9	-0.8	+0.7	0.0	0.4
53	General merch. group, total.	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	-2.6	+1.8	-0.2	0.8
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	-2.1	+2.0	-0.2	0.8
54	Food stores.....	0.8	1.4	1.0	1.6	1.3	1.6	-0.9	+0.8	+0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	1.1	0.5	1.8	1.4	1.6	-0.8	+0.9	+0.1	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations...	0.7	1.2	0.8	3.0	2.2	2.8	-1.4	+2.3	-0.1	1.0
56	Apparel and acc. stores....	1.2	3.4	1.5	2.4	1.8	1.8	-2.8	+2.2	-0.5	1.3
58	Eating and drinking	0.8	1.3	1.1	2.7	2.3	2.6	-1.7	+1.8	+0.3	0.9
591	Drug and proprietary	0.4	0.7	0.5	2.3	1.7	2.1	-1.6	+1.3	-0.1	0.7

¹The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of March - July 1988.

²The ranges shown for the retail trade total are based on sales estimates adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the 12-month period, May 1988 - April 1989. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period May 1987-April 1988.

Note: Coefficients of variation for the ratio of current quarter to current quarter a-year-ago estimates are approximately the same as those for the ratio of current quarter to previous quarter. See appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.